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ABSTRACT

Intended for elementary school teachers, this article deals with reading readiness, handwriting, listening skills, and linguistics in the elementary school. The reading readiness section discusses utilizing pictures in teaching, using real objects in teaching, making picture dictionaries, placing labels on objects, developing experience charts, using a variety of audio-visual aids, telling stories, visual discrimination, auditory discrimination, determining readiness for reading, assisting pupils in identifying words, using configuration clues, using context clues, using phonetic analysis, using syllabication, using picture clues, purposes in reading, reading for facts, skimming, reading for sequence in ideas, reading to follow directions, reading for a main idea, determining reading levels of pupils, microcomputers in the reading curriculum, psychology of microcomputer instruction, and purposes of microcomputer instruction. The handwriting section discusses handwriting in the elementary school, and teaching handwriting, and is followed by a discussion of learning to listen. The final section deals with linguistics in the elementary school; patterns of sentences; expanding sentences; building new sentences; stress, pitch and juncture; and teaching students to communicate. (SR)

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READING AND THE LANGUAGE ARTS

Marlow Ediger

One of the most important curriculum areas in the elementary school is reading. If the teacher emphasizes much reading of content in social studies, science, mathematics and the other curriculum areas of the elementary school, then reading in the elementary school curriculum becomes very important. Not being able to read well may then mean that pupils do rather poorly in all curriculum areas of the elementary school. In a modern elementary school, however, a variety of learning activities is important to provide for individual learners.

Reading can well be an excellent kind or type of leisure time activity. In a student's spare time in school or in the home, reading can provide for needed information useful in solving one's problems in everyday situations in life. A student may also read content to enjoy life and gain experiences vicariously. Adults should do much reading in their spare time. It can be an excellent way of enriching the perception of the adult.

It is important for kindergarten and first grade pupils to have satisfying experiences related to realizing optimum achievement in reading. Thus a good reading readiness program is important for young children prior to engaging in a formal program of reading. Many pupils fail in reading due to a poorly developed and conducted reading readiness program. What can the teacher do to help kindergarten and first grade pupils in a good reading readiness program?

Utilizing Pictures in Teaching

The teacher must develop a good file of pictures for use in classroom teaching. These pictures, among other ways, can be used in a reading readiness program. If pupils are studying a unit on the farm

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in social studies, they can develop background information pertaining to the names of farm animals, machinery, and buildings through the study of related pictures. Thus, later on when pupils may be reading content from basal readers on farm life, they will understand the concepts and generalizations better than if they had not had the unit relating to the farm. Building background information is an important facet of a reading readiness program.

Reading readiness books from a basal series contain many pictures. Here, the teacher must assist learners to develop interest in and discuss the pictures. Many valuable suggestions are given in the manual in helping teachers provide interesting, meaningful, and purposeful learning activities. The teacher must be creative in using the suggestions for teaching. In some cases, the experienced teacher may think of better methods and approaches to use in teaching than those given in the manual. The manual is a guide and is not prescriptive.

As a result of studying pictures from the teacher's own file and from the reading readiness series of a basal reader, the child should think in terms of pictures supplying valuable information in learning. The learner when reading in a formal reading program can be aided in identifying and unlocking new words with the use of picture clues. For example, if a child is reading content on a specific page, he may not know the correct pronunciation of a particular word such as "lamb." He looks at a picture on the same page from which he is reading and in the illustration a lamb is pictured. The word makes sense within the sentence. Thus, the learner has used picture clues to determine the meaning of the new word. Pupils need to have ample opportunities to

study pictures in a reading readiness program to develop background information as well as to be able to use pictures later in formal reading programs to unlock and identify new words.

Once pupils are engaged in learning activities involving reading with the use of basal readers, pictures in the series as well as related pictures from the teacher's own file can be used to develop interest in reading. If pupils are to read a story pertaining to the life and times of Benjamin Franklin, related pictures from the basal reader and from the teacher's own file can be used to arouse pupil curiosity for reading. Questions can be asked by both pupils and the teacher pertaining to the pictures. Answers to these questions can be discussed which will assist learners to understand content better when actually reading the story. The new words for the reading activity can be printed in neat manuscript letters on the chalkboard prior to reading. These words can be written on the chalkboard as they relate to the discussion of pictures in the basal reader and from the teacher's own file. In the ongoing discussion, questions raised by the teacher and pupils, pertaining to the previously mentioned pictures, can be utilized in having pupils read content with a purpose. For example, supposing that a pupil or several pupils ask the following question pertaining to a picture, "Why did noblemen in many cases live in castles during the Middle Ages?" This could then provide an excellent situation where pupils can read the needed pages from the basal reader in order to get an answer for the question.

Using Real Objects in Teaching

Pupils must experience reality in ongoing learning activities. Inaccurate concepts and generalizations may result when little

attention is paid to reality.

Much background information can be developed within pupils in a reading readiness program when real objects are used. If kindergarten or first grade pupils are studying a unit on the neighborhood shopping center, with teacher guidance an excursion should be planned to visit a shopping center. Prior to the visit, questions can be identified for which information and data will be sought. During the excursion, information can be obtained in answer to the questions. Following the excursion, ample time needs to be given to discussing answers to questions as well as other observations which were made. Later on, pupils may be reading about the neighborhood shopping center utilizing the basal reader. Thus, the background information gained from the excursion should assist learners in developing desirable understandings, skills, and attitudes presently, as well as providing necessary information to understand content which will be read later using a series of basal readers.

Interest centers in the classroom can provide pupils with many valuable learnings. For example, during the fall months, pupils can bring leaves of many colors, caterpillars, insects, shells, an empty bird nest, and other items for an interest center. An excellent discussion by pupils with teacher guidance can follow pertaining to the items on the center. Later on, when pupils will be reading related content, they should understand better what is being read due to having had related background information.

Making Pictured Dictionaries

Pupils can learn to identify new words as well as build background information when making and using pictured dictionaries, also commonly

called pictionaries. If pupils in a readiness program are studying a farm unit, they could bring pictures to school of the following farm animals and machines: cows, pigs, sheep, hens, tractor, combine, harrow, plow, and disk. The pictures could be neatly arranged in a scrap book with the related abstract words printed below each picture in neat manuscript letters. Pupils can thus learn to identify abstract words by studying the related pictures. For example, the word "tractor" will be printed beneath the picture of the tractor. Some pupils may not have the needed magazines in their homes from which a good source of pictures can come. Perhaps, the teacher and/or the school has old magazines which can be utilized by these pupils in developing the pictured dictionary.

Several leading publishing companies publish pictionaries. These books can also be used by the teacher to guide learners in studying pictures to develop an adequate number of concepts and generaliztions as well as recognize abstract words.

Placing Labels on Objects

The teacher needs to select some important objects in the classroom and place related labels on them written in neat manuscript letters. It is important, however, not to clutter the classroom with labels. Cluttering the classroom with labels on objects may frustrate the child rather than helping in word recognition and identification. Labels could be placed at the proper place pertaining to the following objects neatly displayed on an interest center:
house, car, boy, girl, man, woman, grass, street, and bicycle. This activity should assist learners in identifying abstract words.

The teacher could place labels on objects in the classroom, such

as "table", "desk", "chair", "book", "door", and "window". The purpose of this activity would be to assist learners to develop a basic sight vocabulary which is useful for more formal reading activities at a later time.

Criteria to utilize in selecting objects which should have labels attached to them in a reading readiness activity could be the following:

1. the objects selected pertain to words commonly used by children in speaking activities.
2. the objects selected would relate to common experiences in the lives of children.
3. the objects selected would pertain to words the child will meet up with later when reading abstract words.
4. the objects are interesting to learners and meaning can be readily attached to them.

Developing Experience Charts

A very valuable approach to help pupils develop readiness for reading is the developing of experience charts. As the name indicates, learners need to have acceptable experiences from which a chart containing abstract words can be developed. At the beginning of the kindergarten or first grade year, pupils could take an excursion to various important places within the school building. They could visit the principal's office, the cafeteria, and the custodian's quarters. Each person in the above designated places could speak about his duties and responsibilities. Pupils should ask questions pertaining to comments made about duties and responsibilities as presented by the principal, cafeteria workers, and the custodian. After the excursion has been completed, an experience chart can be developed by pupils with teacher guidance. The teacher should write pupils' comments in neat

manuscript letters on the chalkboard. In the time devoted to a presentation of ideas by the pupils pertaining to experiences on the excursion, learners may present comments like the following which the teacher can write on the chalkboard:

We saw the cooks preparing food.

They were very friendly.

The principal showed us her office.

He told us of his work.

The custodian helps keep our school clean.

Generally, the teacher would write ideas just as they are given by pupils. The teacher could ask for a different way to state a sentence if there is a lack of pupil clarity in expressing ideas. Pupils can notice that talk can be written down. They are presenting the ideas, and the teacher is doing the recording.

Illustrations can be drawn by pupils pertaining to the content on the experience chart. Pictures may also be collected and put next to the related ideas on the experience chart. Pupils with teacher assistance must spend an adequate amount of time reading the content on the experience chart. The teacher would point to the words as pupils read content. Soon, pupils will begin to recognize words on the chart. Thus, in the reading readiness program, learners are beginning to develop a sight vocabulary. They will notice that some words are longer than others. Some have taller letters than others. Thus, pupils will notice likenesses and differences between and among words and letters.

The experience charts can be placed into a binder resulting in a booklet for future pupil reference and reading. Pupils can again look

at these experience charts and read them on their own or with teacher leadership. The experience chart approach is excellent in a reading readiness program when emphasizing the following criteria:

1. Pupils have had life-like concrete experiences from which ideas can come for the experience chart.
2. Learners present the content pertaining to ideas on the experience chart.
3. Pupils can see and notice that ideas which are presented can be written down.
4. Pupils under teacher guidance can read content pertaining to their very own experiences.
5. Experience charts can be filed for future reading by pupils.
6. Pupils are involved in many experiences pertaining to oral expression which is of utmost importance in communication.
7. Excursions generally provide for individual differences since learners can interpret experiences at different levels of complexity in accordance with capacity and achievement levels.
8. The experience chart concept provides experiences for pupils to develop more proficiency gradually in the reading of abstract words.
9. Since the content of the experience chart is based on experiences pupils have had personally, meaningful learnings for pupils should thus be a result.

Using a Variety of Audio-Visual Aids

To provide for individual differences in any class, a variety of learning activities must be provided. This should also assist in providing for different learning styles in a class. A variety of different learning activities involving the use of audio-visual materials can do much to develop readiness for reading within a given set of learners.

The use of transparencies and the overhead projector can provide interesting, meaningful, and purposeful learning activities for pupils in a reading readiness program. In a unit on transportation, different

forms and types of transportation such as cars, buses, taxis, trucks, and bicycles can be shown on transparencies. These different means of transportation can be discussed with pupils. Later, learners will be reading about these different types of transportation. Reading becomes easier for pupils if previously they have acquired concepts and generalizations pertaining to the abstract words which will be encountered.

Films, filmstrips, and slides can provide learning activities which will assist learners in a reading readiness program. These audio-visual aids, as one example, may pertain to a unit on holidays; perhaps, Christmas customs in the United States as well as other countries are shown. Later on, in a more formal reading program, pupils will be reading about Christmas customs in different lands; thus the readiness program has played an important role in developing pupils background information essential for reading.

The opaque projector also has an important role to play in a good reading readiness program. Pictures from magazines, newspapers, and old textbooks can be shown on the wall or screen with the use of an opaque projector. The teacher can point out specifics pertaining to pictures shown. For example, a teacher can point out how toys differ from one nation to another with the use of the opaque projector. Pictures pertaining to toys of various countries and nations of the world should be carefully selected. It is almost a certainty that pupils will be reading about toys in a more formal reading program.

Telling Stories

It is important that learners develop appropriate skills for story telling. The teacher should read stories to pupils on their

understanding and interest levels. Pupils learn much from listening to these stories being read to them. If the stories are short, pupils can practice telling them. This requires an attention span of adequate duration to listen to the story or stories. It also requires the child being able to recall the story. Ultimately, the child needs to be able to tell the story. Proper order or sequence of events and ideas is important in this learning activity. Thus pupils are engaging in the use of oral or spoken language. They are also presenting ideas in a group situation or setting. Stories from library books or from basal readers follow a specific sequence. Thus pupils in a reading readiness program should have an ample number of experiences pertaining to telling a story in proper order as far as sequence of ideas are concerned. If pupils can learn to tell a short story using proper sequence of ideas in a reading readiness program, learners will then be able to follow a story better when reading abstract words since a certain sequence of ideas will be followed when reading that story.

Stories that children tell to other learners should provide situations where success is an inherent part of the learning activity. Thus, the child will be spurred on to greater efforts in the area of reading.

Visual Discrimination

The teacher must select learning activities which will assist learners in visual discrimination. The act of reading abstract words requires that learners be able to notice likenesses and differences among and between words. For example, in the act of reading pupils must notice the length of different words. To be sure, some words are longer in length as compared to other words. Some words begin with

taller letters; others begin with shorter letters. Within a word there are variations in the height of letters. Some letters, of course, go below the line.

Pupils need many experiences in a reading readiness program to notice likenesses and differences among pictures, individual letters, and words. To begin with, the teacher would want to have pupils develop skill to notice gross differences among and between pictures. Reading readiness books contain, in many cases, learning activities such as the following pertaining to noticing likenesses and differences in pictures:

1. The pupil is to cross out the picture of a boy that looks different from the other two boys which look exactly alike.

2. Learners are to place a mark on the pail that looks different from the other two pails which are identical in appearance.

The teacher can also use pictures from her own file in guiding learners to become more proficient in noticing gross likenesses and differences such as in the following activities:

1. The pupil is to point to the apple that looks different from two other apples.

2. Pupils are to identify the cat which is different in appearance from the other two cats.

The teacher needs to think of learning activities which follow good sequence from the learner's point of view when determining sequential achievement for pupils pertaining to visual discrimination. The learner will reveal if he needs more practice in making gross discriminations between and among pictures. If the child demonstrates that he has mastered learnings related to gross discrimination among pictures, then sequential learnings can be provided whereby learners gradually differentiate between and among pictures where finer distinctions need

to be made. An example can be given at this point where pupils would mark the picture that is different from the other two, such as three men looking exactly alike, however the buttons on the shirt of one man are missing. The child would need to utilize visual discrimination in noticing this fine difference when comparing and contrasting the three pictures

The teacher also must provide learning activities for pupils where ample opportunities are given to notice the configuration of abstract words. For example, in introducing learning activities of this kind, the teacher could duplicate or mimeograph papers pertaining to the following exercise where pupils cross out the word that is different from the other two words:

1.	man	table	man
2.	girl	boy	boy
3.	wagon	cow	wagon
4.	lion	lion	cub
5.	run	jump	jump
6.	horse	pig	pig
7.	lamb	so	lamb

The number of examples which pupils are to work will depend upon the purpose pupils will perceive from the ongoing learning activities. Pupil interest in reading readiness activities should be developed and maintained. Having pupils work at a learning activity such as this for an excessive length of time will generally destroy learner interest in reading.

Gradually, the words selected by the teacher for pupils to notice likenesses and differences should be more nearly alike in configuration

such as in the following examples:

1.	man	mouse	man
2.	run	rat	rat
3.	bird	bird	boy
4.	nest	nose	nest
5.	boy	baby	baby
6.	way	wagon	way
7.	the	those	those

In the examples given above, all words start with the same letter for the set in number 1, number 2, number 3, and so on. The ending of one word is different from the other two words in each set.

The teacher can also have pupils develop skills in visual discrimination pertaining to crossing out the letter that looks different from the other two letters such as would be the case in the following examples:

1.	m	t	m
2.	b	y	b
3.	o	l	l
4.	p	a	a
5.	c	c	b
6.	d	o	o
7.	n	l	n

The above examples pertain to pupils making discriminations in letters for each numbered item. The following exercise pertaining to visual discrimination would come at a later time in proper sequence from the learner's point of view:

1. c o c

2. b l l

3. f d d

4. r r s

5. m s m

6. e o e

7. i i j

It is much more difficult for pupils in a reading readiness program in noticing which letter is different from the other two letters in the following exercise as compared to the preceding one:

1. d b d

2. n n m

3. t l t

4. g y y

5. h h k

6. v v w

7. u v u

The letter "d" and the letter "b" look very much alike. In reading readiness activities, learners may look at a letter or word moving from right to left instead of left to right. Thus it is easy to see why learners would confuse the letter "b" with the letter "d" or vice versa. Reading the letter "d" from a right to left progression makes the same letter appear as a "b". The letters "m" and "n" look quite similar in appearance and configuration. The letters "t" and "l" are comparable in height with a slight variation in appearance. This exercise then would involve the making of fine discriminations. It would come late in a readiness program involving visual discrimination.

Auditory Discrimination

To develop skill and proficiency in reading, the pupil should be guided in noticing likenesses and differences in sounds that are made by letters and within words. The teacher should select poetry carefully to be read to pupils in which cases learners could hear words which rhyme. Carefully selected poetry can capture the interests of pupils and develop proficiency in hearing words which rhyme.

The teacher, for example, could ask pupils which words rhyme with each of the following: fall, man, hill, and moon. Pupils, of course, will be at different achievement levels when giving words which rhyme with other words. For some learners, hearing likenesses and differences in sounds is extremely difficult. A few children may not be able to hear these sounds. They will benefit more from learning activities involving visual discrimination. The teacher needs to be understanding, kind, and patient in working with all learners regardless of achievement levels. Pictures can be used by the teacher to initiate a discussion pertaining to rhyming words. Pupils can give words that rhyme with an object in the picture.

The teacher can also have pictures pertaining to selected words whereby pupils are asked to give other words which have the same beginning sound. For example, the teacher could have pupils give words which rhyme; however, other words should be given also, such as "hat," "bat," "hit," "sit," and "pot."

When pupils look at labels on selected objects or engage in reading content under teacher guidance from the experience chart, associations will be made between symbol and sound or sounds by pupils. The same would be true of pupils reading words when studying pictures in a

pictured dictionary. Pupils also learn to associate sound with symbol when studying words which follow a particular pattern such as in the following:

cat mat fat

rat bat hat

sat pat vat

In the preceding list of words, pupils can develop generalizations pertaining to what happens to word like "cat," for example, when the initial consonant is changed. The teacher can introduce a lesson such as this by showing a picture of a cat with the abstract word "cat" below the illustration. Learners can be asked to give words which rhyme with cat. These words can be written on the chalkboard as they are given pupils. Thus, children can see the relationship of sounds to symbols.

Determining Readiness for Reading

The teacher needs to evaluate pupil achievement continually to determine if learners are ready for a more formal program in reading. The sequence must not be abrupt when changing from a reading readiness program to one which is more formal. In the reading readiness program, pupils were starting to identify words by studying experience charts, labels on objects, words in pictured dictionaries, and words which follow a pattern as far as sound-symbol relationships are concerned. In a more formal program of reading, pupils would gradually be learning to identify more and more new words.

Numerous approaches can be utilized to determine if pupils are ready for reading. There are many standardized reading readiness tests for reading. The reader should survey, study, and analyze a

variety of reading readiness tests. Certainly, schools will want to evaluate, in particular, the validity and reliability of the standardized tests currently being used in their schools.

Teacher observation can be a good procedure to use in determining if pupils are ready for reading. The teacher should consider the following questions pertaining to each child being ready for reading.

1. Does the pupil enjoy looking at illustrated library books at the reading center?

2. Is the learner asking how to pronounce selected words being observed in library books?

3. Are learners interested in ongoing activities in the reading readiness programs?

4. Can pupils individually notice likenesses and differences between pictures, words, and letters?

5. Are learners developing proficiency in auditory discrimination?

6. Can pupils individually on their present developmental level tell a story in proper sequence?

7. Does the child generally pronounce words accurately?

8. Do learners work and play together harmoniously?

9. Does the pupil have feelings of an adequate self concept?

10. Is the child cooperative when interacting with others?

11. Does the pupil accept responsibility for his actions?

12. Is the attention span of the child adequate to benefit from a more formal reading program?

13. Does the child exhibit characteristics of having good physical and mental health?

Assisting Pupils in Identifying Words

Pupils need to develop an ample number of techniques to identify, recognize, and unlock new words. Too frequently, pupils have not developed an adequate number of approaches to recognize new words. Thus, they are hindered in reading achievement. It is important for

the teacher to utilize a variety of approaches in guiding learners to use various techniques of word recognition and identification. If approaches are not varied, boredom and a lack of interest in reading may result. Purpose may also be lacking in learning to identify new words.

Using Configuration Clues

Pupils need to notice how words differ in form and shape. Occasionally, learners will not look at words carefully to notice how they are alike and how they are different. Some may not retain the mental image of a word. Teachers must use a variety of approaches in helping learners recognize words by sight.

In introducing a new selection to be read, the teacher could print in neat manuscript style the new words on the chalkboard for the reading lesson. Pictures could be discussed which would directly relate to the new words so that learners attach meaning to each of the new words. Thus, the pupil would learn a definition, or definitions, for each of the new words as they will be used in context within the selection to be read. Pupils should look carefully at each new word printed in neat manuscript letters on the chalkboard. This is necessary so that pupils obtain an accurate mental image of each new word. Thus, pupils will be noticing the length of the word, the size and shape of letters within each word, and the general configuration of the new word. If the chalkboard alone is used to introduce new words, the method or approach used in teaching can become monotonous. Thus, other approaches should also be used such as the use of the overhead projector with the new words printed on transparencies. New words for a selection to be read by pupils can also be printed in neat manuscript

letters on flash-cards. Pupils would have as much time as needed to study the configuration of new words from the flash-cards.

Using Context Clues

In some situations where learners cannot determine a new word, many meaningless words are inserted which do not make sense within a sentence. The learner then is not using context clues. Consider the following sentence: The man was hunting rabbits. Supposing the child does not know the word "hunting". Let us assume he guesses what the unknown word is. The following words would be correct as far as the use of context clues is concerned: chasing, wanting some, dressing, a friend of, disliking, jumping over, shooting, petting, feeding, and washing. The following words would not fit in as far as context clues are concerned when making a substitution for the unknown word "hunting": heavy, hole, humming, hinting, and him. The child needs to be assisted in selecting words which make sense or are meaningful within a sentence. However, using context clues is not adequate when attempting to identify a new word. Many words can be substituted for an unknown word and the completed sentence is meaningful. Phonetic analysis is thus also important in identifying new words.

Using Phonetic Analysis

The child who is beginning and progressing in the area of reading must also use phonetic analysis in determining unknown words. In the following sentence, many words would make sense when the blank space is filled in: I see a _____. One could respond with the following words and be correct in terms of using context clues: cat, dog, mouse, rabbit, horse, lion, lamb, cow, and zebra. The child must use context clues to identify new words. However, this is not adequate in many

cases; it was noticed that many words make sense within the preceding sentence. If the child has had interesting, meaningful, and purposeful learning activities pertaining to phonics, the child should select the word "rabbit" (assuming it is the correct word) as the new word encountered in reading since the letter "r" has a completely different beginning sound as compared to other words in the list. The word "rabbit" also has a different ending sound than do other words in the list. The letter "t" is rather consistent in its relationship to a specific sound as would be true of the following words: bat, hat, cat, mat, pat, and rat.

Using Syllabication

Pupils with teacher guidance should develop skills relating to analyzing words into component parts in order that new words may be identified. For example, a pupil may think that the word "unlike" is a new word he is encountering in reading in the following sentence: Bill and John were brothers, but they were unlike in many ways. The pupil has identified other words previously which had the prefix "un" such as in the following: unable and unimportant. He has also read the word "like" previously. By dividing the word "unlike" into syllables, the pupil can readily identify what was believed to be a new word. The word "unlike", however, was not a new word; it consisted of old words or parts of words rearranged into a new combination. Thus the child can unlock or recognize many "new" words when dividing these words into syllables.

The pupil may also be able to identify words which are new through the technique of syllabication and phonetic analysis combined. The pupil may be reading a sentence containing the new word

"irrelevant". The word is rather lengthy and may appear to be quite difficult to the child. By analyzing the word and dividing it into parts, the pupils has a fairly good chance in determining its pronounciation. The correct way to divide the word into syllables would be the following: ir/rel/e/vant. Sound and symbol relationships are quite consistent here. The pupil will have a much easier time to identify the new word when attempting to divide it into syllables as compared to looking at the configuration of the word only.

A word of caution must be presented here. Pupils can spend an excessive amount of time in analyzing words in terms of syllabication and phonetic analysis. Analyzing words should not cut down in pupil interest in reading. Words that pupils can read as sight words should not be analyzed unless it helps pupils to identify new words. Ultimately, good readers identify words quickly by noticing the configuration of words being read.

Using Picture Clues

Pupils can identify many new words by using picture clues. For example, the pupils may be reading the following sentence and cannot identify the word "car": Billy was washing the car. By looking at the picture on that page, it may show a picture of a boy washing a car. Thus the picture could tell the child what the unknown word is. To be sure, in some situations, pictures will not give clues in helping to determine the unknown word. Or, there may be too many persons, objects, or scenes in a picture in assisting the reader to determine the unknown word through theh use of picture clues. Consider the following sentence and assume that "house" is a word which the pupil cannot identify while reading: Billy saw a house. In the picture on

the same page where the pupil is reading content, there are many things that Billy could have seen such as a car, a man, a woman, and a dog. With knowledge of phonetic analysis, the child can associate the proper sound with the initial consonant "h" in the word "house" and thus identify the correct word. No other object, person, or place being represented in the picture has the same beginning sound.

Purposes in Reading

Not all content, of course, is read at the same rate of speed. Comprehension is the important factor in reading. Time is wasted if the reader does not understand what is being read. The purpose involved in reading, among other things, will assist in determining the rate of speed an individual reads. Too often, pupils, as well as adults, want to read all content at the same rate of speed.

Reading for Facts

If a pupil reads content to gain facts, a somewhat slow kind of reading will generally result. Each word becomes important in reading when pupils read content to comprehend facts. It is important for learners to have a purpose for reading content. Comprehension, generally, then will be at a higher rate. If other readiness activities have been provided for, the teacher can, for example, have the following purpose involved in reading whereby pupils would read to gain facts: Lets read to find out what machinery is used by farmeres to seed and harvest wheat. In this example, pertaining to a unit on the Great Plains area, pupils would read factual information related to the established purpose such as a plow, harrow, disk, springtooth, grain drill, combine, truck, and tractor. The information needed to answer the question or purpose for reading was highly specific or

consisted of facts.

Another example, if pupils are to read content pertaining to a unit on the Middle Ages, the teacher and/or pupils may have the following purposes which would relate to gaining facts: What kind of furniture would you find in a castle? What kind of work did serfs do? What are the different kinds of rooms used for in a castle?

Skimming

A rapid kind of reading for pupils involves skimming. Not every word on a page needs to be read when skimming content is a goal in silent reading. If pupils are studying a unit on the city, they could skim for the name of a city such as Boston, New York, Chicago, or Cleveland. If pupils are studying a unit on the Civil War, they could skim content pertaining to the beginning or ending date of that war. Or, in studying a unit on Great Britain, pupils could skim content pertaining to famous persons in British history, such as Winston Churchill, Anthony Eden, and Edward Heath.

When skimming content becomes an important purpose in reading, bits of information such as important names, dates, places, and events should be stressed. Certainly, pupils should not skim content which is unimportant and irrelevant. There is too much content available in various academic disciplines for pupils to spend time on that which is trivial.

The names of persons and places generally start with capital letters thus giving learners a clue in how these words differ in appearance from other words. To be sure, each word that begins a sentence will also start with a capital letter. However, many words, of course, on a page do not start with capital letters. Dates are

written with numerals and have a completely different appearance as compared to abstract words. Pupils can benefit much by learning to skim content for important names, dates, places, and events.

In using the index, no one would waste time in looking up an entry by starting with the first listed entry in the index and taking each listed entry after that in sequence. If a pupil is looking up information on magnets, he generally will not start with the first entry under the letter "a" and look at all the other entries under that letter before going on to the entries under letter "b" followed by other letters of the alphabet in sequence. The entry "magnets" will come somewhat in the middle of the index. Once the entries have been found under the letter "m", pupils should then locate the beginning entries under the letter "m" since the word "magnets" will come in that general area. Thus, the child is skimming content when using the index. Much time can be saved in reading when skimming becomes an important goal in gathering information at selected intervals.

When a pupil uses the table of contents in a book, skimming also becomes an important purpose. If the pupil wishes to find information on the topic of electricity, he could skim chapter headings in the table of contents of an elementary school science textbook to notice if a clue is given as to which page in the book has the needed information; the pupil may also skim entries in the index.

Reading for Sequence in Ideas

It is very important for pupils to think in terms of sequence when reading content in many different curriculum areas. For example, if pupils are reading information on Eskimo's building sleds for use in the Arctic areas, the purpose may arise in reading as to how the sleds

are built. The child would then read content pertaining to the order or sequence of steps involved in building the sled.

Historical content very frequently deals with order of happenings. Too many pupils have erroneously generalized that George Washington was the first president while Abraham Lincoln was the second president of the United States. The sequence, of course is incorrect. A purpose in reading historical content related to the appropriate unit could be the following: Lets read to find out who the first four presidents of the United States were in order of their becoming president.

Reading to Follow Directions

Life in society demands that individuals become proficient in reading to follow directions. When frozen food packages are purchased, individuals need to be able to read directions accurately and follow them so that a good final product will result. In preparing frozen foods, one needs to know nothing whatsoever about cooking. If the directions are followed carefully, a good dish of brussel sprouts, peas, corn, okra, or other vegetable will result.

Elementary school pupils, generally, are very interested in constructing model rockets, cars, airplanes, and boats. In many cases this requires accurate reading of directions so that a good model will result.

In working exercises from workbooks and textbooks, the pupil first needs to read the directions necessary for completing the work. Otherwise, the exercises may have been worked incorrectly.

In taking standardized tests, it is very important to follow directions carefully. Otherwise, money and time has been wasted in taking the tests. The results may then not have any value.

When pupils read to follow directions, each word must be identified correctly. Comprehension of content when reading to follow directions is of utmost importance. The directions cannot be followed unless the reader comprehends what has been read.

Reading for a Main Idea

Facts that are read should be related to a larger framework of thought or a main idea. Facts will generally be forgotten sooner as compared to a main idea. Thus, the teacher needs to have pupils read for main ideas. Main ideas, however, can be supported with facts.

From the reading of an entire novel, one can state in a sentence or several sentences the main idea or ideas. Pupils can state the main idea after having read a library book. They can also state the main idea or ideas from reading a story in the basal reader. A main idea can also be selected from reading a page of content pertaining to a particular story.

In the reading of social studies content, for example, pupils may have realized as one main idea pertaining to a unit of study on Great Britain that individuals, people, and nations are interdependent. To support this main idea with concrete examples, Great Britain exports manufactured products such as cars, buses, motors, tractors, furniture, and toys to other nations of the world. Great Britain imports agricultural products such as meat and grain from other nations of the world. Thus, Great Britain is dependent upon other nations for an adequate food supply. Whereas, other nations of the world depend upon

Great Britain for manufactured products. Interdependency between and among nations is then involved.

Main ideas that pupils develop can be utilized, in many cases, again and again. The main idea that pupils developed pertaining to individuals, people, and nations being interdependent can be used again and again as different nations and areas of the world are being studied. Areas and nations depend upon each other for peace, food, shelter, clothing, other necessities, and luxuries. Pupils should be assisted to develop important main ideas. They should check the main ideas developed with supporting facts. The accuracy of each main idea can be checked and evaluated.

Determining Reading Levels of Pupils

It is, of course, no secret that all fifth graders in an elementary school, for example, cannot benefit equally in reading from a fifth grade reader. In a heterogeneously grouped fifth grade class, the range in reading achievement may vary from the second or third grade to the sixth or seventh grade level. The range in reading achievement could be even greater than that depending upon the capacity, past achievement, interest, and motivation of pupils.

It behooves the teacher to determine reading levels of pupils at any early age and thus provide for individual differences. If a pupil is in the fifth grade, what is her reading level? What materials for the teaching of reading will be most beneficial for this child? Some third and fourth grade pupils read better than do some fifth graders. It is possible that a few second graders may read better than do some fifth grade pupils. Grade levels may mean very little in terms of pupil achievement in an elementary school.

One approach that the teacher may utilize to determine reading levels of pupils is to use an informal approach which requires no standardized tests. At the beginning of a given school year, the teacher could mark off 100 running words in a beginning part of a basal reader. The pupil must have no prior practice or experience in reading the content. The pupil individually reads the content orally to the teacher. The teacher records the number of words that the child cannot identify. He also asks questions of the pupil pertaining to comprehending the contents. The child should be able to identify approximately 95 to 98 out of 100 running words read to the teacher. The pupil should be able to answer correctly,, approximately, three out of four questions covering the content. These standards are approximate and not absolute. The teacher can then determine if reading materials presently being used by the child are too difficult. Additional ways should be utilized in evaluating which reading materials are most beneficial for a particular child.

Numerous standardized tests are on the market to assist in determining reading levels of pupils. Directions as given in the manual for each standardized test should be followed carefully. Test results for each pupil should be evaluated accurately and carefully. It is of utmost importance that the tests have high validity and reliability. These tests must be valid from the point of view in helping to determine reading levels of pupils. They must be reliable

in that consistency of results would be in evidence if learners took the same test over again without opportunities to practice what is contained within the test. Consistency of results would also be in evidence if a given set of learners took a different form of the test for the second testing. It is highly recommended that a standardized tests be evaluated in terms of what specialists in testing and measurement say about each test.

The classroom teacher of reading through careful observation of each pupil's progress can do much to evaluate if materials used in the teaching of reading are beneficial to each child. Pupils must use reading materials which are interesting and meaningful. They should find that reading is an enjoyable activity and an important curriculum area as well as being a very worthwhile leisure time activity. If pupils are to become avid readers in adult life, they must like reading in the elementary school.

Microcomputers In The Reading Curriculum

The microcomputer era is increasingly becoming important in the school and class setting. Prior to the utilization of microcomputers, the following methods of reading instruction,, among others, have been utilized:

1. basal readers with its accompanying manuals. The manuals provide objectives, teaching suggestions, and evaluation procedures to notice student achievement. Basal readers are published by commericial companies and represent a rather popular method in the teaching of reading. Content in these readers provide common learnings for a given set of students in a classroom.

2. individualized reading with its emphasis upon using trade or library books, not basal readers. Each student selects his/her own library book to read sequentially. Methods of appraising comprehension and achievement from reading a library book involve the utilization of a conference with pupil and teacher participation.

3. language experience approaches involve personal as well as group activities which provide background information. The experiences of learners from excursions and/or audio-visual information provide students with content for the experience chart. The teacher, generally in manuscript letters, records ideas presented by pupils from the excursions or audio-visual presentation. Pupils with teacher guidance read the recorded ideas.

4. the Initial Teaching Alphabet (ITA) which has selected new or modified symbols to record words in a rather consistent sound (phoneme) and symbol (grapheme) relationship. Thus, the letters "oo" in moon are printed " " to represent consistency between phoneme and grapheme. Or, the "ow" sound in how are written "ou" to emphasize consistent sound symbol relationships. The long i sound (as in my, high, dye, I, pie, and light) is always printed ie. The following symbols, as examples, are printed the same in ITA as compared to traditional spelling---b,d,f,h,k,l,m,n,p,r,s,t,v,w,y, and z.

5. linguistic procedures with its emphasis upon patterns. The patterns might involve words, such as ban, can, fan, man, pan, ran, and tan to be utilized within sentences. Young children in the early primary years may learn that an initial consonant is changed in the above named list and a new word results, e.g. changing the letter "b" to the letter "c" changes the word "ban" to "can". In sequence, as learners progress through the grades, they experience patterns where less consistency between grapheme and phoneme is in evidence.

Linguists also emphasize students understanding sentence patterns, such as:

1. subject-predicate.
2. subject-predicate-direct object.
3. subject-linking verb-predicate adjective.
4. subject-linking verb-predicate nominative.
5. subject-predicate-indirect object-direct object.

Microcomputer usage can incorporate philosophies in the teaching of reading from:

1. basal readers.
2. individualized reading.
3. language experience approaches.
4. the Initial Teaching Alphabet.
5. linguistic methods.

Psychology of Microcomputer Instruction

Software utilized in microcomputer teaching situations must follow definite criteria. Certainly, the program utilized must fit into a specific lesson being taught. Thus, if reading for facts is being emphasized, the software being used should directly relate to having students read to acquire salient facts.

Within the framework of microcomputer experiences, learners need to achieve sequence or appropriate order. Steps too difficult to achieve or learnings that lack challenge need to be avoided. New learnings then need to be attained by pupils and yet the content acquired is feasible or possible in its acquistion.

Content presented in software must be meaningful for involved learners. Understanding what is being learned from microcomputer use is very important. Sometimes, pupils experience tasks which lack meaning. Rote learning and memorization of subject matter for a test might then be an end result. It behooves the teacher to choose software which provides students with meaningful subject matter.

Educational psychologists have long recognized the importance of interest as a vital factor in learning. Students who lack interesting experiences, no doubt, turn off and feel boredom. With peripherals such as color, sound, and graphics, interest in learning can be aided. However, the bottom line in developing interest within learners will be the content presented on the monitor or screen. Interest should not be separated from effort. If student reveal interest in learning, effort will be forthcoming. The interests of learners provide for effort. However, if interest is lacking, effort in achieving may also be minimized.

Students need to be ready to benefit from software and microcomputer presentations. Readiness factors are vital to consider before students interact with a given program. If a pupil is not ready to benefit from microcomputer instruction, he/she cannot gain the inherent subject matter. Failure to succeed in learning can hinder or shatter accomplishment on the part of these students. Thus, each teacher needs to determine if a pupil is truly benefitting from interacting with a given program.

Purposes or reasons for participating in ongoing programs is salient. Each student intrinsically should understand why a certain program needs emphasis in microcomputer instruction. If a pupil cannot perceive purpose in a program, the chances are that achievement will go downhill. Deemphasizing purpose stresses a lack of motivation in student achievement.

Individuals sensing reasons for participating in a given activity, possess a higher energy level for learning as compared to a lack of purpose in life.

Reinforcement needs to be inherent in an activity or experience. There are diverse means of reinforcement when students respond correctly to an item in programmed learning. On the monitor, the following reinforcers are in evidence:

(a) a smiley face.

(b) "that's excellent" or similar printed expression.

(c) a pleasant sound, such as a beeper.

(d) a cat applauding.

(e) a musical chime.

Students need to experience success in ninety percent of their responses, approximately, to receive adequate reinforcement. If pupils feel successful, an increasingly adequate self concept should be in evidence. Feelings of failure tend to decrease the value of the personal self. Lower self esteem increases the likelihood for more failure on the part of student learning.

Individual differences among learners need adequate provision. In selected programs, pupils may give the correct commands by typing the letter f (fast), a (average), or s (slow) in terms of the rate or speed of the software and microcomputer presentation. If the pupil cannot predetermine the f,a, or s in frame presentation on the monitor, a learner can respond more quickly than others pertaining to a multiple choice item. Students individual need to achieve optimally.

Quality attitudes need to be developed within students. A variety of activities based on present achievement levels should aid in developing effective attitudes within pupils. Microcomputer instruction is one means of providing for individual differences. Use of textbooks, workbooks, worksheets, films, filmstrips, slides, video tapes, pictures, transparencies, and study prints provide additional experiences for pupils. With diverse learning styles, each pupil needs to experience those activities which assist on an individual basis to achieve as much as possible.

In looking at educational psychology, learners need to experience those activities which are sequential, meaningful, interesting, understandable, purposeful,, reinforcing, and attainable.

Purposes of Microcomputer Instruction

There are numerous means of utilizing personal computers in

teaching students in the area of reading. Tutorial programs provide pupils with new learnings. Thus a program might emphasize each of the following uses in terms of developing word attack skills:

1. phonics in assisting learners to associated sounds with symbols.
2. syllabication in guiding pupils to divide words into syllables and thus unlock unknown words.
3. structural analysis in which students learn to divide words into prefixes, suffixes, and root words.
4. configuration clues whereby learners perceive shape or form of specific words for identification purposes.
5. picture clues whereby a picture provides the identification of unknown words.
6. context clues in helping students to identify a word within the confines of a sentence. The unknown word must make sense with other words contained in that sentence.

Students also need to become proficient in diverse comprehension procedures. Thus, students need to develop skill in reading to:

1. follow directions in a meaningful manner.
2. acquire factual content.
3. determine sequential ideas.
4. separate facts from opinions, fantasy from reality, and accurate from inaccurate statements in reading critically.
5. achieve novel, unique ideas as is true in creative reading.
6. develop main ideas or generalizations.
7. solve problems.
8. achieve satisfaction in recreational reading.
9. skim or scan specifics, such as names, dates, and places.

Certainly, reading for diverse purposes or kinds of comprehension is significant. Each of the above types of comprehending needs to be emphasized in a quality reading curriculum. Individual purposes

require a different kind of comprehension. Not all types of comprehension in reading is done at the same rate of speed. Thus, skimming or scanning for a specific item of information is achieved more rapidly as compared to reading to understand directions. In skimming or scanning, a specific name, date, or place is being located on a page of content and not all words, by any means, need to be read on a printed page or pages. However, in gleaning directions, each word needs to be read carefully so that the end product when following the directions will turn out satisfactorily. If a learner does not understand directions being read, a wrong outcome will, no doubt, follow in whatever is being made.

Dennis and Kansky[1] wrote:

> One view of education pictures the student on one end of the log and the teacher on the other. Teaching takes place as dialogue between teacher and student in which the questions and statements of each are a response to the questions and statements of the other. When not used to the exclusion of other instructional schemas, this is a powerful instructional technique. We call it tutoring.
>
> Computers have been shown to be an effective and economical resource for tutoring. The quality of the tutoring, of course, is a function of the computer programs available. The problem for the designer of such programs is to make the computer behave as if it were a very knowledgeable and creative teacher who is engaged in a dialogue with a single student for the purpose of helping that student to develop important new thoughts. The designer must make the dialogue rich enough to account for variations in student achievement, interest, and learning style. In view of the complex nature of such programs, it should come as no surprise that the supply of them is meager.

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[1] J. Richard Dennis and Robert J. Kansky. Instructional Computing. Glenview, Illinois: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1984, page 14.

In addition to tutorial programs, diagnostic and remediation is significant. Specific errors need to be pinpointed in diagnosing pupil difficulties in reading. After diagnosis has been emphasized, then remediation needs to take place. Remediation emphasizes taking care of difficulties emphasized in the concept of diagnosis. Areas of diagnosis may emphasize:

1. substituting one or more words in place of those contained in context in reading.
2. omitting a word or words being read.
3. mispronouncing words.
4. repeating words identified correctly.
5. inability to recognize a word.
6. hesitation but identifying the word correctly.
7. inserting one or more words.
8. making reversals.

Additional uses for microcomputers include drill and practice, as well as simulations and games. Wright and Forcier[2] listed the following criteria for software selection for drill and practice, as well as simulations and games:

Criteria for Drill and Practice Programs	Criteria for Simulations and Games
1. Format is interactive	1. Clear directions.
2. User can establish the pace.	2. Simple keyboard/paddle use.
3. Provision made for a progression in levels of difficulty.	3. Varying levels of difficulty.
4. Items at same level of difficulty can be selected at random.	4. Realistic situation for role-playing.

5. Employs motivational techniques.	5. High level of interest maintained throughout.
6. Rewards presented for correct responses.	6. Results predicated on user input.
7. Incorrect responses handled appropriately.	
8. Teacher can modify content.	

Handwriting in the Elementary School

The elementary school teacher needs to think of a variety of approaches and methods to help pupils to achieve their optimum in handwriting. Pupils must write legibly so that effective communication may take place. If poor quality handwriting is in evidence, the reader must take an excess amount of time in determining what has been written.

Pupils should be assisted individually in evaluating the kinds of errors that are made in handwriting. Learners may not improve in the area of handwriting unless they have knowledge of the kinds of errors made in handwriting. Pupils may be cursively writing the letter "t" with a loop in it and not crossing the letter properly, thus making it appear as the letter "l." Pupils need to form each letter correctly. These letters should have proper proportions.

Proper slant of letters is important if legible writing is to take place. When uniformity of slant is lacking, an excess amount of time may be spent in determining what is to be read.

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[2] Wright, Edward B., and Richard C. Forcier. The Computer: A Tool For the Teacher. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Co., 1985, page 158.

One common cause of difficulty in legible handwriting is that proper alignment of letters and words is not in evidence. A pupil may try to add a word on a line in the margin resulting in letters which do not properly stay on the line. The letters ending a line may then curve either upward or downward. The reader then has difficulty in determining readily what these words are. If the letters have also been formed incorrectly, legibility of handwriting may indeed be very poor.

Pupils should also space letters and words properly. First grade teachers, for example, may have observed pupils write the following in manuscript style: The c at ra n a way fromthe dog. It is quite obvious that the reader will take more time in reading the above sentence the way it is written as compared to having proper spacing between letters and words. Some learners crowd words together thus making it difficult for the reader to comprehend the contents.

It is important for teachers to praise pupils if they are doing better now than formerly in handwriting. Then all learners can receive praise. Too often, pupils who have high quality handwriting receive praise. Thus, some pupils may receive much praise for very little effort in working toward improved performance in handwriting since this is an area they may excel in. Others may try very hard to improve in the area of handwriting, but eye-hand coordination is lacking. These learners may receive no praise if those who excel in handwriting are given praise only. The teacher should think in terms of having each pupil progress continuously in the area of handwriting. Praise given for improved performance in handwriting for each pupil will spur pupils on toward greater efforts. All learners then can receive praise since

each child can improve over previous efforts. It is important for pupils to develop an adequate concept of the self. Pupils must develop feelings of an adequate self to insure optimum achievement. The teacher must plan and provide for a variety of learning activities for pupils. "Sameness" in learning activities makes for feelings of boredom on the part of learners. A wide variety of learning activities should be provided for pupils involving handwriting. Pupils can improve the quality of their handwriting by writing business letters, friendly letters, poems, stories, invitations, and engage in other functional writing activities. Generally, pupils lose interest in improving quality of their handwriting when drill becomes the only important kind of learning activity.

On Teaching Handwriting

To communicate ideas effectively, pupils need to become proficient in legible handwriting. Handwriting that is not legible presents problems to the reader in terms of time taken to understand ideas expressed in written communication. The teacher must provide quality learning activities involving handwriting so that each pupil can improve over his past performance in increased legibility. A variety of learning activities should be provided so that pupil achievement is in evidence. What can the teacher do to help pupils achieve at an optimum rate in handwriting?

Pupils on an individual basis should receive praise for improved performance in handwriting. Even the pupil with the poorest quality of handwriting can receive praise if he is doing better than formerly. This should spur learners on to greater efforts in this area. Praise,

however, should be given only if there is evidence that improvement is taking place.

Each pupil should have knowledge of the specific kinds of errors he has exhibited in hanwriting. For a pupil to improve, he must receive guidance in diagnosing weaknesses that need to be overcome in handwriting. A pupil may not cross his "t's" and leave a small loop in that same letter resulting in a final product which looks like an "l". Or a pupil may write the letter "e" excessively tall making it appear as an "l". Based upon diagnosis, the pupil can then receive practice to overcome deficiencies in handwriting.

Pupils should attach positive attitudes toward handwriting. Too often learners have been asked to practice skills that have already been mastered. Instead new learnings should be developed. Opportunities should be given to help achieve more legible handwriting rather than being drilled on handwriting skills which have already been gained. Thus each pupil should engage in practicing the following as the need exists to improve over previous performance: 1) improving the slant of letters and words; 2) forming individual letters correctly; 3) having proper alignment of letters and words; 4) spacing letters and words properly; 5) writing letters in proper proportion.

Pupils should not engage in handwriting activities which are excessively long or too difficult. For example, first grade teachers must be careful that excess tension and anxiety do not develop in pupils due to experiences involving lengthy handwriting exercises. These pupils among others must have a variety of interesting learning activities so that learning becomes an enjoyable experience.

The teacher can group pupils for teaching handwriting. Pupils who

need the most guidance and assistance should be placed in one special group in an atmosphere of respect. These learners can receive necessary help in the area of handwriting as the need arises. In the same class some pupils may need very little assistance in handwriting. They can work independently in a variety of learning activities involving handwriting such as developing a special report based on research about a specific unit of study. In today's modern elementary school, desks in a classroom can be moved quietly in a small amount of time so that pupils can be placed into two or three groups for instruction in handwriting.

Pupils should be guided to exhibit their best handwriting in all curriculum areas in the elementary school. Too frequently teachers have emphasized good handwriting only during the time handwriting is actually taught. Pupils may then not transfer the skills of good handwriting to different curricular areas such as social studies, science, mathematics, and the other language arts areas. For example, a pupil may have written slovenly when writing a report in social studies, but the handwriting may have been of good quality in a formal session devoted to teaching these skills. While the pupil is writing the first draft of the social studies report, he will generally not be using the best handwriting. The pupil must think of ideas first in writing content. In the final copy of the report, however, the child can exhibit his best handwriting possible. Pupils need to have ample opportunities to practice good handwriting in the different curricular areas of the elementary school.

Learners should sense that purpose is involved in learning activities involving handwriting. The teacher alone in too many cases

has felt that pupil purpose was involved in the ongoing learning activities. Purpose needs to be developed within pupils for learning. Pupils can write business letters ordering free charts and pictures about a specific social studies or science unit. In this situation a need exists for ordering materials for a unit of study. Each pupil should be encouraged to use his best handwriting since ideas need to be communicated effectively. Pupils can also write friendly letters to relatives and friends. Legible handwriting must be in evidence here so that the receiver of the letter can read the content rapidly. The child should also feel that politeness is involved when using the best possible handwriting to communicate ideas in written form.

Pupils should develop interest in handwriting. No doubt, interest in handwriting has been destroyed by emphasizing much drill on letter formation, slanting of letters, alignment, proper proportion of letters, and spacing of letters and words. When pupils practice these selected handwriting skills, an interest in the purpose needs to be felt and accepted by learners. A variety of well-chosen learning activities can help learners to develop and maintain interest in handwriting.

Unfair competition among pupils has also hindered many pupils from liking the area of handwriting. Pupils in a class exhibit different achievement levels in handwriting. The teacher needs to accept each pupil on the present achievement level and guide all learners to make continuous progress.

The teacher of handwriting must be interested in the teaching of handwriting. The attitudes of the teacher in many cases may be reflected within pupils. The classroom teacher needs to think of

methods and approaches to teaching handwriting which would capture the interest of pupils.

Learning to Listen[2]

Many opportunities for learning are lost due to poor listening habits. It is important for individuals to be good listeners so that effective communication of ideas occurs. In society the "explosion" of knowledge will increase at a faster rate in the years to come as compared to previous times. One way to obtain knowledge is to listen carefully to the thinking of others.

There are other reasons for being a good listener. To be respectful and considerate of others, it is necessary to listen carefully. One who is a good conversationalist must react to the thinking of individuals she is conversing with. When taking part in discussions, each must contribute ideas. Problems cannot be solved unless solutions proposed are carefully evaluated. This requires careful listening. In introducing a visitor to other individuals, it is of utmost importance to listen carefully to the names and other related information of persons being introduced.

Since careful listening is an important skill to develop, what learning activities can the teacher provide?

1. Classroom teachers should evaluate their own teaching to determine if directions given to pupils are repeated too frequently. Pupils may feel directions for an assignment will be repeated if they are not grasped the first time. The teacher needs to evaluate if directions were given accurately, concisely and clearly. If directions are lengthy, they should be written on the chalkboard for pupil referral.

When teachers present explanations and discuss content with pupils, evaluation needs to be made of repetitious statements which encourage poor listening on the part of the listener. Pupils can come

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[2] Marlow Ediger, "Learning to Listen," School and Community. Volume 58 (November, 1971), pp. 14, 82, 83.

to depend upon statements being repeated excessively by the teacher and thus poor listening is encouraged.

2. Cooperatively, pupils with teacher assistance could develop standards pertaining to good listening. Following the completion of a selected learning activity, pupil achievement could be evaluated in terms of these standards. Weaknesses in listening could be identified with further practice being given to overcome these deficiencies.

3. Devote special class sessions to helping learners become better listeners. For example, tape recordings could be made of different sounds in a selected environment such as the sound of a chain saw sawing wood, a caterpillar leveling land, and carpenters building a new home. Pupils with adequate background knowledge could attempt to identify these sounds.

The teacher could have pupils put their heads on their desks and identify sounds made in the classroom. Learners, in this situation would not be able to see the action taking place when the sound is being made. For example, the teacher could hit a piece of wood with a hammer, pour water from a pitcher, or tap the foot on the floor. Pupils would then be asked to identify these sounds.

When pupils are taken on an excursion, call their attention to sounds in the environment such as birds singing, squirrels chattering, and dogs barking. Ask pupils to identify different sounds made in the environment.

4. The teacher and pupils need to provide a learning environment which promotes good listening. Unnecessary noises which hinder optimum achievement in listening should be avoided. Too frequently, competing sounds in the environment hinder pupils from gaining necessary ideas.

A pupil may pay more attention to unnecessary noises made by others rather than concentrating on ideas being presented.

5. The teacher and pupils periodically should evaluate the temperature in the classroom. A too warm temperature makes pupils drowsy. If the room temperature is cold, pupils would concentrate more on being cold than on listening to ideas being presented in various learning activities. Proper ventilation is also important.

6. A variety of learning activities involving listening should be provided for pupils. Tapes, filmstrips, films, slides, excursions, construction activities, research, art activities,and dramatizations provide opportunities for pupils to engage in speaking and listening. Learning activities must be varied so that pupils do not become bored with "sameness." Pupils' interests must be developed and maintained so that a high degree of comprehension will result from the ongoing learning activities. It is also important to select learning activities which provide meaningful learning for pupils. Pupils in many cases will listen carefully when they can attach meaning to what has been presented verbally.

7. The teacher should be a good example for pupils to follow in the area of listening. If the teacher is a poor listener, pupils may think and feel that careful listening is not necessary. In the

classroom as well as in the school cafeteria and playground, the teacher should make a definite effort to listen carefully to the ideas of pupils.

8. In learning activities provided for pupils, purpose should exist for the listening activity. The teacher can briefly discuss with pupils why they need to listen carefully to a learning activity involving the use of oral language. Hopefully, learners will sense it is important to listen intently.

9. Stress the importance of good listening in all curriculum areas of the elementary school. There needs to be a transfer of learning form special times devoted to teaching listening skills to careful listening in the elementary school throughout the school day.

10. Pupils with hearing difficulties should be seated as close as possible to the spoken voice. In this way, they also can observe the lips and facial expressions of the speaker.

11. Pupils should receive praise for improved performance in listening. Learners like to be rewarded for doing better than formerly. Thus, praise given judiciously would spur learners on to greater efforts in listening. All pupils in a class can then receive praise for improved listening.

Linguistics in the Elementary School

Linguists have made many contributions in improving the elementary school language arts curriculum. They place heavy emphasis upon pupils participating in various learning activities involving the spoken language. In the past, pupils have learned very little about the English language and its use when filling in blank spaces in workbooks and exercises from textbooks. Too frequently, pupils have filled in blank spaces in sentences with "is", "are", "was", or "were" incorrectly. The point is that filling in blanks contained in exercises within workbooks and language arts textbooks lacks reality pertaining to situations faced in life. When individuals in every day society speak or write, they generally do not fill in blank spaces.

Linguists differentiate between the concepts of "grammar" and "usage". Grammar is a description of how a language works or operates. A noun, for example, is a word that can be changed from singular to

plural or from plural to singular. "Man" is a noun since it is singular and can be changed to plural as would be true of the word "men." Each of the following words is a noun since it refers to one in number (singular) and can be changed to mean more than one (plural): duck, cow, boy, girl, woman, tiger, elephant, baby, owl, turkey, dog, cat, and monkey.

Verbs are words that can be changed from present to past tense or from past to present tense. The following words are verbs since can be changed to indicate something that is happening presently and yet each word can be chaged to indicate a happening which has already occurred: run, swim, sing, walk, dance, jump, hop, skip, move, and eat. The past tense of each of the above named words would be the following: ran, swam, sang, walked, danced, jumped, hopped, skipped, moved, and ate.

In traditional grammar, parts of speech were classified in terms of definitions. For example, a noun was a word which referred to a person, place, or thing. A verb was defined as a word which dealt with action or state of being. Thus "running" was a verb in the following sentence since action was involved: The boy was running a race. Much confusion exists in the following sentence when thinking of verbs being action words: Running is my favorite exercise. The word "running" pertains to doing something or action is involved. However, "running" is the subject of the sentence and not the predicate or verb. The word "is" is a verb in the sentence and yet it does not relate to action. The word "is" however can be changed from present to past tense.

Usage can be thought of as choices that are made when words are selected to be used in sentences. When giving an oral report to a class of graduate or undergraduate students, the tendency would be to

choose words and sentences whcih would be more formal and sophisticated as compared to conversing with a well-known friend or one's husband or wife.

Not all individuals from different socio-economic levels choose the same words when speaking. The concepts of standard and nonstandard English can be brought into the discussion. The individual from a very low income family might select the following words to express himself: I ain't got no money no how. Using standard English, one would use the following words to express the same idea: I have no money or I haven't got any money. When thinking of usage then, choices are made among words.

Patterns of Sentences

Pupils in the elementary schools use various patterns of sentences. The child entering kindergarten may express himself very well by using sentences containing six or more words. He can convey ideas very well to others and yet have no knowledge of grammar. Too frequently, much time has been spent in teaching grammar with very limited results in terms of improved speaking and writing. The study of grammar should help pupils improve in communicating ideas effectively to others. This objective has not been achieved in too many cases.

Generally, pupils, as they progress through the elementary school, can identify five patterns of sentences which are used frequently when communicating ideas with others.

The first sentence pattern consists of the noun-verb or subject-predicate pattern. The following are examples of this pattern:

1. Dogs bark.

2. The boy swims.

In the first sentence "Dogs" is a noun and the subject of the sentence. "Dogs" can be changed from singular to plural or plural to singular. "Bark" is the verb. It can be changed from present to past tense or vice versa. In the second sentence "boy" is a noun and the subject of the sentence whereas "swims" is the verb or predicate of the sentence.

A second sentence pattern used by elementary school pupils would pertain to he noun-verb-noun pattern or subject-predicate-direct object pattern. The following are examples:

1. The boy caught the ball.
2. The carpenter built the garage.

In the first sentence, "boy" is a noun and is a word which can be changed from singular to plural (boy-boys); "boy" is the subject of the word "caught." "Caught" is a verb since it is a word which can be changed from past tense to present tense (caught-catch). The word "ball" is the object of "caught," such as the boy caught what? The answer, of course, is "ball."

A third sentence pattern would pertain to the noun-linking verb-predicate adjective pattern. The following sentences would illustrate this pattern:

1. The flowers were beautiful.
2. The man was tall.

In the first sentence, the word "flowers" is a noun since it can be changed from plural to singular (flowers-flower). The word "were" is a verb since it can be changed to present tense (were-are). The word "beautiful" is a predicate adjective since it tells about or describes "flowers." Linguists may think of adjectives as patterning with the word "very." The word "beautiful" would be an adjective then since it

patterns with the word "very" such as "very beautiful." The word "beautiful" is not a noun since it cannot be changed from singular to plural or vise versa. It is not a verb since "beautiful" cannot be changed from present to past tense or vice versa.

A fourth sentence pattern could pertain to the noun-linking verb-predicate noun pattern as would be illustrated by the following sentences:

1. John is a boy.
2. Mr. Brown was a farmer.

In the first sentence "John" and "boy" refer to the same person. Both are nouns since each word can be changed from singular to plural. The word "is" is a verb since it can be changed from present tense to past tense. In the second sentence "Mr. Brown" and "farmer" refer to the same person and these words are joined together by the verb "was."

A fifth sentence pattern used by elementary school pupils is the noun-verb-noun-noun or subject-predicate-indirect object-direct object pattern. The following sentences are examples:

1. John gave Jim a present.
2. The girl made Sally a scarf.

In the first sentence "John" is a noun and is used as the subject of the sentence. "Gave" is a verb which can be changed to present tense when thinking of a rationale for classifying that word. John gave what? The answer is "present." The word "present" is a direct object and tells what was given. The question arises as to whom or for whom the present was intended. The answer would be "Jim." The word "Jim" then would be classified as an indirect object. Some pre-schoolers, as well as early primary grade pupils will already use sentence patterns which follow the noun-verb-noun-noun pattern. When pupils celebrate

their birthdays or at Christmas time, they will be using oral expressions, such as the following:

1. I gave John a present.
2. Jancie gave Sally some dishes.
3. The teacher gave each pupil some pencils.
4. Mother bought me a doll.
5. Daddy bought us some candy.

Expanding Sentences

To make sentences more descriptive and more meaningful, writers can expand each of the five sentence patterns discussed previously.

One way that sentences can be expanded is through modification. The following sentences follow the noun-verb pattern:

1. The boys walked.
2. The girls sang.

Certain questions can be asked about each of these sentences. For example, in sentence one, the following questions could be asked:

1. How many boys were there?
2. How old were these boys?
3. How did they walk?

If modifiers are added to the sentence, more clarity in writing will result. For example, the first sentence--"The boys walked"--could be expanded to read as follows:

1. The three tall boys walked slowly.
2. Two kindergarten boys walked rapidly to the playground.

A second approach used to expand sentences is through compounding words, phrases, clauses, or sentences. Notice the following sentences:

1. Jim likes to read library books.
2. John likes to read library books.

In these sentences, the subjects "Jim" and "John" can be compounded to make a meaningful sentence which would read as follows: Jim and John like to read library books. The writing also becomes less monotonous

when the words "Jim and John" become compound subjects.

Other words can also be compounded in order to expand sentences. Notice the following sentences:

1. Dora sang.
2. Dora danced.

These sentences can be written in a much more interesting way through compounding the verbs as would be true of the following expanded sentence:

Dora sang and danced.

Phrases can also be compounded when expanding sentences.

1. The boy walked in the yard.
2. The boy walked around the house.

These sentences can be combined with the phrases "in the yard" and "around the house" compounded, such as in the following sentence:

The boy walked in the yard and around the house.

A third way of expanding sentences would be to use subordination. The following basic sentence would follow the noun-verb-noun or subject-predicate-direct object pattern: John made a touchdown. This sentence can be expanded by adding a subordinate clause. John, who played the entire game, made a touchdown. Additional information describing John "who played the entire game" is added to the basic sentence "John made a touchdown." A subordinate clause could also modify the verb or predicate: While he felt very tired, John made a touchdown. The subordinate clause "While he felt very tired" modifies "made" since it tells when the touchdown was made.

A fourth way of expanding sentences is through the use of appositives. Notice the following basic sentence: Carl Jones lives on Line Street. Additional information can be added pertaining to Carl

Jones such as would be true of the following sentences:

Carl Jones, an employee of the post office, lives on Line Street.
Carl Jones, a professional golfer, lives on Line Street.

In the first sentence, "Carl Jones" and "employee" refer to the same person with no verb or predicate to join the two words. In the second sentence, "Carl Jones" and "golfer" refer to the same person.

Using appostivies in sentences makes for variety and interest in the kinds of sentences which are written. Monotonous writing occurs when sentences are written in the following manner:

Carl Jones lives on Line Street. Carl Jones is an employee of the post office.

The first sentence can be expanded by using an appositive thus omitting the necessity of having the second sentence:

Carl Jones, an employee of the post office, lives on Line Street.

Building New Sentences

A basic sentence, also called a kernal sentence, can be taken and changed to various other kinds of sentences with little or no change in the choice of words used.

Consider the following sentence:

John plays football in the yard.

This is a declarative sentence stating a fact. Pupils with teacherr guidance can change this sentence so that a question is asked:

Does John play football in the yard?

The original kernal sentence can also be used to state a negative:

John doesn't play football in the yard.

The order of words can be changed in the kernal sentence thus making a different kind of transformation:

In the yard John plays football.

A command or request can also be indicated by changing the original kernal sentence. The sentence when transformed may thus read:

Play football in the yard, John.
Please play football in the yard John.
Pupils should have ample opportunities to transform kernal sentences to indicate the following:

(a) questions
(b) negatives
(c) inversions
(d) commands or requests.

Stress, Pitch, and Juncture

When individuals communicate ideas orally to each other, stress, pitch, and juncture are in evidence. Not all words, of course, are stressed equally much when orally communicating ideas. Consider the following sentence when thinking of one pupil asking another pupil a question:

Did you get an A in social studies?

If the pupil asking the question stresses the word "you" rather heavily in speaking, it may sound as if it were impossible for the listener to receive an A grade in social studies. It also emphasizes you as an individual being spoken to rather than someone else. If the letter grade "A" is stressed heavily by the speaker, it may indicate that it is difficult to receive such a high mark in social studies; it may also emphasize that an "A" grade has been received rather than a lower grade. If the word "social studies" is stressd heavily, the emphasis is upon social studies and not a different curriculum area. Pupils should have ample opportunities to study a particular sentence by emphasizing or stressing one word within that sentence more than the other words. Learners can then notice the effect this has on the meaning of the spoken sentence. Sentences which are spoken orally can

be tape recorded in order to evaluate the degree of stress or emphasis a particular word received. Linquists recognize and identify four degrees of stress.

Pupils should also study the highness or lowness in pitch of words as they are spoken in sentences. Sentences can change in meaning depending upon the pitch of words. Notice the following sentences:

1. Tom swims.
2. Tom swims?

The same words are used in both sentences. In the first sentence, the voice is lowered at the end of this declarative sentence since a fact is stated. In the second sentence, the speaker raises the pitch of his voice at the end due to asking a question about Tom being able to swim. Not always, of course, is the ending word pitched higher than the other words in a sentence when a question is asked. With teacher guidance, pupils should have much practice in listening to selected sentences where the same word within a sentence is pitched differently. The tape recorder should be used to assist pupils in thoroughly evaluating sentences through replays as to meanings changing when words are pitched at different levels. Linguists recognize and identify four levels of pitch.

The concept of "juncture" is also very important for pupils to understand. When sentences are written, commas, periods, question marks, and exclamation points indicate where pauses occur when reading content. When oral language is utilized, the speaker needs to pause at appropriate places in order that the listener can attach accurate meanings to ideas. If the speaker omitted all pauses in the following sentences, it would be difficult to determine the kinds of foods served at a picnic:

At the picnic, the family had ham, sandwiches, jello, salad, and milk.

If the speaker did not pause adequately after the word "ham", the listener may interpret that the family enjoyed "ham sandwiches" at the picnic rather than "ham" and "sandwiches". The same would be true if the pause would not be adequate between the words "jello" and "salad"; the listener may think that "jello salad" was served. Pupils with teacher guidance should listen to selected sentences and determine how meanings change within a sentence if pauses are not adequate at specific points.

Teach Them to Communicate

Elementary pupils need opportunities to practice speaking so that they may learn to communicate effectively.

The classroom teacher must implement certain guidelines if pupils are to experience continuous success in learning activities involving speaking. These guidelines are:

1. Learning activities involving speaking should have purpose. The teacher may ask children to select information on a topic and present their conclusions to the class. Pupils, however, may "sense" little or no purpose in this learning activity. They need to feel that purpose is involved. For example, in a social studies unit, pupils should be stimulated to ask questions. Attractive and interesting scenes on a bulletin board, a film or filmstrip will encourage this. Pupil's questions can then provide the basis for gathering information and presenting findings to the class. Oral reports based on purposes of the pupils help improve oral communication.

2. Learning activities involving speaking should be interesting.

"Sameness" generally reduces pupil's interest. For example, if pupils must give an excessive number of oral book reports, interest in activities involving speaking may be lost. The classroom teacher needs to think of a variety of activities to help pupils develop speaking proficiency. In completing a science unit, a pupil or committee could interview a person who had lived for some time in a foreign country being studied. Interviewing the resource person for other children provides variety in activities involving speaking. Hobbies brought to class can form the basis for a speaking activity. Different learning activities should be explored as means of helping pupils develop interest in speaking.

3. Learning activities involving speaking should be meaningful. A child who has memorized content may not attach meaning to facts in situations involving verbal communication. Learning activities using films, filmstrips, excursions, reading, discussions and pictures help pupils understand and attach meaning to what has been learned. Meaningful facts, concepts, and generalizations develped by the learners should assist in communicating effectively.

4. Learning activities involving speaking should help pupils realize objectives. Pupils differ in achievement, capacity, energy level, motivation and coordination, among other things. The teacher needs to consider differences among pupils when determining goals for each pupil in oral communication. Each child needs to be evaluated in terms of improvement over previous performance in speaking. The learning activity in speaking should help pupils feel successful in realizing their objectives. The teacher and pupil together should decide which objectives in oral communication the student should

realize.

5. Learning activities involving speaking should evaluate pupil achievement. Tape recordings of discussions and conversations help pupils determine with teacher guidance, strengths and weaknesses in oral communication. Respect for the thinking of others is important. Strengths of pupils should be rewarded through praise. Needed areas of improvement can be cooperatively identified. Additional speaking activities should be provided to overcome these deficiencies. A variety of techniques should be used in evaluating pupil achievement in oral communication.

In Summary

Teachers in the elementary school must provide a reading readiness program which provides for individual differences in the class setting. A variety of learning activities must be provided for pupils in the reading readiness program. Pupil achievement in reading should evaluated continuously to provide for sequential achievement on the part of learners. Skills must be developed on the part of readers to identify and recognize new words. Pupils should have ample practice in reading for a variety of purposes.

Teachers must follow recommended teaching procedures in helping learners realize the objective of legibility in handwriting.

Pupils should be guided to develop optimum proficiency in listening through carefully selected learning activities.

Linguists have made important contributions in improving the language arts curriculum. Teachers of language arts should assess and compare traditional grammar with the linguistic approach.

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